

Journal said, for option three, "Suffice it to say, it is so complicated we are not even sure we understand it," but it does have a combination of a benefit reduction, of benefit reductions, increase in age of retirement, and huge trust fund transfers from the general fund.

There is a much simpler solution; but this commission, this President, will never touch it, because it revolves around tax fairness.

Americans only pay the regressive Social Security tax on the first \$850,400 of income. So that means someone who earns \$160,000 pays Social Security taxes at half the rate of someone who earns \$80,000 or half the rate of someone who earns \$10,000 a year on every dollar they earn. If they earn twice that, it goes down to a quarter.

Now, one simple solution would solve the problem of Social Security forever: have every working American pay the same tax on every penny they earn; that is, Mr. Parsons, the CEO of Time Warner, would contribute the same percentage of his income in taxes as would the minimum wage worker.

It is fair, and the Social Security trustees tell us that in fact that is more money than we need to assure the future of Social Security forever. Unfortunately, this commission and this President will never go there.

REPUBLICAN GIVEAWAYS TO INSURANCE COMPANIES AND LARGE CORPORATIONS DO NOT SOLVE AMERICA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 3 months ago today, as we all know, was September 11. That afternoon, gas stations, some number of gas stations all over the country raised their prices to \$4 and \$5 and \$6 a gallon. We all remember that. Most of us would call that war profiteering.

However, others around the country, the great, great majority of people in this country, came together. They put out their flags, they gave blood, they volunteered, some went to New York to volunteer, went to the Pentagon to volunteer, and schoolchildren all over the country collected pennies, nickels, and dimes to send to the victims and their families.

But something else emerged in Washington, not war profiteering in the simple sense of raising gas prices, but a more sophisticated kind of political profiteering: this Congress, pushed by the President and the Republican leadership in this Congress, first of all gave a huge multi-billion dollar bailout to the airlines, requiring nothing from the airline executives, requiring nothing

for airport security, requiring nothing of airline safety.

Then this Congress turned around and gave tax cuts for the largest corporations in the country: a check, a tax refund to IBM, a check from the Federal Government for \$1.4 billion; \$1 billion to Ford; \$900 million to GM, and the list went on and on and on.

Then, this Congress gave a huge bailout to insurance companies, insurance executives who usually preach "We want government off our backs, we believe in free enterprise, except when we have our hand out and want money from the Federal Government."

Then last week this Congress, with unemployment creeping upward to the highest 2-month increase we have seen in 21 years, with the anxiety that people have about their jobs, with LTV workers and other steel industry workers losing their jobs around the country, this Congress passed, at the behest of the Republican leadership and the largest corporations in the country, Trade Promotion Authority, which will send more of our jobs ultimately to Latin America and around the world.

My dad used to talk about World War II and shared sacrifice, about war bonds and WAVES and WACs and victory gardens and scrap metal drives. But instead, this Republican Congress and this President demand tax cuts for IBM while ignoring 100,000 airline workers, doing zero for them. This President and this Congress demand a bailout for the insurance companies while ignoring workers who have lost their jobs and not trying to help them with any health insurance and any health care costs.

Instead, instead of shared sacrifice, this Republican Congress and this President demand of Congress that we pass Trade Promotion Authority, instead of providing public investments for our broken-down schools and broken-down infrastructure and broken-down highway and rail system.

□ 1300

Imagine though, Mr. Speaker, if the President and the Republican Congress called on us like in World War II for shared sacrifice. Imagine if the President called on young patriotic Americans to enlist in the Army or the Peace Corps, to enlist in the Navy or Americorp, to enlist in the Air Force or Teach for America. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President said to his friends, and the Republican leadership said to their friends in the drug industry, no more special favors; we are not going to allow them to charge American consumers and America's elderly more for prescription drugs than anywhere else in the world; we are not going to allow that anymore in this Congress. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President called on Americans to volunteer for Meals on

Wheels or cleaning up the neighborhood or tutoring children that are having difficulty keeping up. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Imagine if the President would say to his friends in the oil business, imagine if he would say we are going to wean ourselves off Middle Eastern oil, we are going to find a way to help Americans conserve and get better gas mileage and turn their thermostats down and all the things the President could do to appeal to Americans, to appeal to his friends in the corporate boardrooms and the oil companies, to wean ourselves off that Middle Eastern oil. That is what waving the American flag is all about.

Instead of this Republican President and Republican leadership bestowing tax cuts on the wealthiest Americans, imagine if we helped those who needed help the most, and imagine, instead of the President and the Republican leadership bestowing tax cuts on the largest corporations in the world in this country, imagine instead if they appealed to the best in America.

Imagine.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OTTER). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m. today.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Dr. Lloyd J. Ogilvie, Chaplain, United States Senate, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Father, whom to know is to love and whom to love is to serve, we ask for a fresh empowering of Your Spirit today. Renew in us the excitement of being partners with You in bringing Your best for America. We are here by Your divine appointment. Therefore we need not fear. You will supply exactly what we need each hour of this day. Replenish our enthusiasm. May we do old duties with new delight. Revive our expectation. You have plans for us and power to accomplish them. Regenerate our hope.

Make us hopeful people who expect great strength from You and attempt great strategies for You. Fill this Chamber with Your presence and each Representative with Your power. Replenish their inner wells with Your peace that passes understanding. We claim Your promise through Isaiah,